

VZCZCXRO6208
PP RUEHGI
DE RUEHNJ #0238 1501721
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 291721Z MAY 08
FM AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6259
INFO RUEHAR/AMEMBASSY ACCRA PRIORITY 0553
RUEHGI/AMEMBASSY BANGUI PRIORITY 1503
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 0065
RUEHKH/AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM PRIORITY 0504
RUEHLC/AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE PRIORITY 1063
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 1764
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 2313
RUEHYD/AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE PRIORITY 1690

UNCLAS NDJAMENA 000238

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/C; LONDON AND PARIS FOR AFRICA WATCHERS; ACCRA
FOR GEOFFREY HUNT

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: ECON EFIN ENRG PREL CD

SUBJECT: CHAD RESPONSE: CHINA'S ENGAGEMENT IN AFRICA

REF: A. STATE 41697

1B. 07 N'DJAMENA 676

11. (SBU) Summary: Since reopening its embassy in N'djamena in 2006, China's engagement with Chad has focused on responding to a variety of needs expressed by the Chadian government. Among the focus areas of Sino-Chadian cooperation are social services, energy, infrastructure, and military assistance. The U.S. has regular contacts with Chinese officials (the Ambassador has bi-weekly meetings with the four Permfive Ambassadors resident in N'djamena on regional security, humanitarian affairs, and political development), but we have no cooperation on specific projects. End Summary.

12. (SBU) Chinese engagement in Chad, as discussed in ref B, is very active in several key sectors:

-- Infrastructure: Chinese engineering firms have begun construction of six roads covering ten kilometers in N'djamena to build Chad's decrepit road network. The events in February have stopped construction, but Chinese officials tell us that it will begin again after the rainy season ends (around October/November).

-- Energy: Chinese companies are investing in exploration of new oil fields (Chinese National Petroleum Corporation -- CNPC -- is undertaking seismic studies) and continues to consider a small-scale joint-venture oil refinery project with the Chadian National Oil Company. According to Esso (the ExxonMobil-led oil consortium that exports Chadian petroleum through Cameroon), talks continue with CNPC about shipping CNPC's eventual crude oil via the Chad-Cameroon pipeline that Esso operates.

-- Social Services: China currently provides doctors, nurses, and medical technicians, pharmaceuticals, and equipment in the health sector. The Chinese government has sent nine doctors to work at one of the two main hospitals in N'djamena and has shipped hospital equipment, including x-ray machines, to Chadian hospitals. The Chinese government also provides scholarships to around 30 Chadians to study at Chinese universities each year. China will build three schools in N'djamena and in rural areas.

-- Military: In the absence of greater transparency in terms of activities and assistance, it is difficult to ascertain exactly how the Chinese government is militarily engaging in Chad. Nonetheless, the Chinese tell us that the Chinese government has targeted Chadian staff military training (similar to U.S. IMET programs). We also understand that the

Chinese have sold weapons to the Chadians but we are unaware to what extent or what agreements exist between the Chadian and Chinese militaries. The Chinese do not admit to having a resident defense attache in N'djamena.

Cooperation - Now and in the Future

¶3. (SBU) The Mission engages with the Chinese on various issues, but particularly on policies and activities related to the humanitarian crisis in Darfur, regional security, and political development. The Ambassador has bi-weekly meetings with the four Permanent Ambassadors resident in Chad to discuss regional security, political development, and humanitarian issues, which the Chinese Ambassador attends. As the Chinese appear to be already heavily involved in those areas where the U.S. is most active, the likely areas of future bilateral cooperation continue to be energy, regional security, political development, and healthcare development.

NIGRO